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## Best Workplaces for Commuters

From [Larry West](#),  
Your Guide to [Environmental Issues](#).  
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### EPA Publishes Annual List of Companies that Ease or Eliminate Daily Commuting

**October 18, 2006** – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today announced its annual list of Best Workplaces for Commuters among the Fortune 500 companies. This year, 133 companies, employing more than 700,000 workers, qualify for the list.

The top 20 employers are ranked by the percentage of their domestic [U.S.-based] employees who are eligible for commuter benefits, such as subsidized transit passes, telework, carpool programs, and emergency rides home.

#### The Cost of Congestion

Every year, traffic congestion caused by millions of Americans commuting to and from work results in 3.7 billion hours of lost productivity, adds up to 92 million work weeks for commuters stuck in gridlock, and costs the nation \$63.1 billion in wasted time and fuel.

Not everyone is driving alone in their cars.

Public transportation usage increased more than 23 percent between 1995 and 2006, according to the American Public Transportation Association. The organization also estimates that approximately 33 million trips are taken on public transportation each weekday in the United States.

Unfortunately, single-driver commuting is increasing, too. Between 2002 and 2012, vehicle miles from drive-alone commuting is expected to increase by at least 15 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the EPA, and to generate an additional 43 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually.

#### Commuters Want Alternatives

Workers have good reason to look for alternatives to traditional commuting. In 2005, it cost workers an average of 56.1 cents per mile, or \$8,410 per year, to own and operate a domestically produced midsize car, according to the American Automobile Association. Even before the recent gasoline price increases, 18 percent of household income in the United States was dedicated to transportation, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

#### Companies That Ease Commutes Reap Benefits

Employers also have good reason to offer their employees commuting alternatives. On average, constructing a parking space costs between \$1,500 for a surface lot and \$17,400 in a parking garage, so the cost of accommodating all of those cars workers drive solo to their jobs each day is enormous.

Even more important, however, workers who have alternative work options, such as teleworking from home or flexible work schedules, have the highest productivity, enjoy better mental health, and are less likely to leave their companies. And alternatives to commuting also help with recruiting. According to a national survey by GfK Automotive, 57 percent of commuters expressed interest in working for an employer that offers a commuter benefits program.

#### The Top 20 Best Workplaces for Commuters

In 2006, frustrated commuters looking for a better way, and place, to work can start by exploring opportunities with these Top 20 companies on the list of Best Workplaces for Commuters:

1. Intel
2. Microsoft
3. (tie) Google Inc.
3. (tie) Oracle
5. QUALCOMM
6. Yahoo! Inc.
7. Cisco Systems
8. Sun Microsystems
9. Texas Instruments
10. Applied Materials, Inc.
11. Safeco Insurance
12. Reliant Energy

13. Wyeth
14. Apple
15. IBM
16. Advanced Micro Devices
17. (tie) EMC Corporation
17. (tie) El Paso Corporation
17. (tie) NIKE, Inc.
20. Schering-Plough

**For more information on Best Workplaces for Commuters:**

- [View the Top 20 companies](#)
- [View the full list of Best Workplaces for Commuters](#)
- [View Fast Facts about Best Workplaces for Commuters](#) [pdf]

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